



U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., Chairman

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News Advisory

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Sensenbrenner Highlights PATRIOT Act Conference Report Civil Liberty Safeguard #8

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Judiciary Committee Chairman F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr. (R-Wis.) today highlighted the eighth of the dozens of civil liberties safeguards included in the PATRIOT Act conference report approved last month by a bipartisan majority of the House and pending before the U.S. Senate.

PATRIOT Act Conference Report Civil Liberty Safeguard #8 – Requiring the Justice Department’s Independent Inspector General to Conduct an Audit of Each Justice Department Use of Section 215 Orders:

Section 215 of the PATRIOT Act authorizes the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation or a designee of the Director to apply to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) Court for an order requiring the production of any tangible things (including books, records, papers, documents, and other items) for a foreign terrorism or spy investigation. This authority provides counterterrorism and law enforcement officials a helpful and less invasive tool to both uncover what activities suspected terrorists or spies are engaged in and clear innocent people suspected of terrorism or spying.

The PATRIOT Act conference report provides additional public information and congressional oversight by requiring the Justice Department’s independent Inspector General to conduct an audit for each Justice Department use of Section 215 orders.

These audits will be compiled into two Inspector General public reports with classified annexes. This civil liberty safeguard contained in the conference report does not exist under current law.

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